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Origin

Info:

Department concerned lest threatened break between Castillo, Cordova Cerna and Monzon (URTEL 225) lead renewed violence and jeopardize anti-Communist victory achieved by June revolution. Cable your estimate current intentions Monzon and Castillo and military support on which all three men can count.

On basis evidence available to Department it appears we have following alternatives:

(1) Support Cordova proposal to purge Monzon and subordinate Castillo to new group dominated by Cordova. If successful program would ensure effective elimination Communists from political life country. Disadvantages are Cordova's lack significant popular support except among conservative and business groups and uncertainty his ability control regular army and liberation military forces.

(2) Unlimited support of Castillo against Cordova and Monzon on basis is popularity with people, his control airforce and presumed control liberation forces and at least significant portion regular army. Disadvantage is his demonstrated lack of ability govern and risk defections and revolution now or later.

(3) Attempt persuade Castillo Monzon and Cordova to collaborate until revolutionary

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revolutionary changes better consolidated by taking following steps:

(a) Assure Monzon and regular Army we are not opposed to Army as an institution and recognize great majority officer corps loyal present Government. As long as regular Army loyal Government we will urge protection its legitimate interests. FYI ONLY, we would interpret this to include gradual and selective purge unreliable officers in such way as would minimize risk regular army officers will consider counter-revolution necessary protect their jobs./ END FYI. In this connection please comment probable reaction Castillo and Cordova to such an assurance to Monzon.

(b) Friendly but firm statement to Castillo and Cordova that we expect them collaborate for good Guatemala until revolutionary gains consolidated. In this connection not clear Department whether Monzon's resignation from Government at this time would provoke reaction from regular Army and whether Castillo or others pressing for his immediate resignation. Please clarify.

Department inclined believe third alternative preferable but recognizes decision must be governed by local ~~xxxxxx~~ situation. Submit Embassy analysis stating whether situation deteriorating so rapidly that immediate action necessary.